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Message Text

PAGE 01 MANILA 01767 150845Z

70
ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W
---------- 040548
R 150715Z FEB 74
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1078
INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC

S E C R E T MANILA 1767

EXDIS

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, MARR, MOPS, RP, CH
SUBJECT: PHILIPPINE POSITION WITH RESPECT TO SPRATLEY ISLANDS

REF: A. MANILA 0859
B. MANILA 1522

1. IN REF A, I POINTED OUT TO THE DEPARTMENT THE APPARENT APPLICABILITY OF U.S.-PHILIPPINES MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY IN THE EVENT OF AN ARMED ATTACK AGAINST PHILIPPINE "FORCES" IN THE SPRATLEY ISLANDS. THE POTENTIAL AT THAT TIME INVOLVED THE POSSIBILITY OF CLASHES BETWEEN PRC AND PHIL FORCES. IN REF B, I REPORTED THAT PHIL INTENTION TO REPLACE THEIR ARMED FORCES WITH CIVILIAN TECHNICIANS WAS HELD IN SUSPENSE BECAUSE OF RECENT SOUTH VIETNAMESE MILITARY MOVES IN THE AREA.

2. THIS MORNING'S MANILA PRESS CARRIES SEVERAL RATHER BELLIGERENT STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO A SOUTH VIETNAMESE SPOKESMAN WHICH SOME FILIPINOS HAVE CHOSEN TO INTERPRET AS A THREAT OF POTENTIAL MILITARY CONFLICT
SECRET

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BETWEEN GVN AND PHIL FORCES. IN THIS CONNECTION, I FEEL IT PRUDENT TO POINT OUT TO THE DEPARTMENT THAT THE U.S.-PHIL MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY DOES NOT RPT NOT CONTAIN THE USUAL QUALIFICATION ABOUT ATTACK BY

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"COMMUNIST" FORCES. INSTEAD, IT REFERS IN ITS PREAMBLE TO "EXTERNAL ARMED ATTACK" AND TO "NO POTENTIAL AGGRESSOR." IN ITS OPERATIVE ARTICLES, IT MERELY REFERS TO "AN ARMED ATTACK."

3. IT IS MY INTERPRETATION THAT OUR TREATY WOULD BE OPERABLE, THEREFORE, IF A GVN FORCE ATTACKED PHIL FORCES IN THE SPRATLEY AREA. IT IS MY SUGGESTION, CONSEQUENTLY, THAT THIS FACT BE QUIETLY BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF OUR FRIENDS IN SAIGON.

4. IT IS NOW A LITTLE OVER THREE WEEKS SINCE I ASKED THE DEPARTMENT FOR AN AUTHORITATIVE INTERPRETATION OF THE U.S. PHIL MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY AND I STILL HAVE NO REPLY. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN GOT BETTER SERVICE THAN THIS.
SULLIVAN

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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TAGS: PBOR, MARR, MOPS, RP, CH
To: STATE INFO SAIGON
TAIPEI
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